

REMARKS

Further to the response filed on April 29, 2002, attention is directed to the fact that the present process employs recrystallization in an aromatic hydrocarbon, optionally in the presence of a co-solvent.

As pointed out on page 4, lines 18 to 24 of the present specification, suitable cosolvents with the aromatic hydrocarbon are those solvents which increase solubility of the hydroxycarboxylic acid in the organic phase and which are readily separable by distillation. This is recited in new claim 23.


On the other hand, water or an aqueous buffer of the prior art does not increase the solubility of the hydroxycarboxylic acid in the organic phase, since water is not (or is only slightly) miscible with the aromatic hydrocarbons.

For the foregoing reasons, it is apparent that the rejections on prior art are untenable and should be withdrawn.

If the Examiner has any comments or proposals for expediting prosecution, please contact the undersigned at the telephone or facsimile number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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